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ONYX INFORMER

**FEB
2003**

SERVING THE PEOPLE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA SINCE 1972



Beyond Black History

...Mass Education

...A Story Untold

...True Hip Hop

ONYX INFORMER

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Beyond Black History Month



Nearly 35 years have passed since Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, yet he has acquired a permanent place in our minds. Perhaps it is because for many of us raised in the United States (and possibly even those raised abroad) Dr. King was the first Black figure to enter our primary school curriculums.

Each year, on the third Monday of January, his life is commemorated in the form of a national holiday. People across the nation attend organized gatherings that are meant to provide a quick summary of a man's life achievements. Young school children crowd into cafeterias turned auditoriums and wait in anticipation as their fellow schoolmates perform their "Dr. Martin L. King Was A Man" skits and sing freedom songs. Each child adorns him or herself with a hand crafted face mask, which is to be worn on stage so that everyone can be Dr. King for a day. The especially courageous children recite excerpts of the classic "I Have a Dream". They listen intently as their teachers speak of a beautiful color-blind world that can one day come to be if all the children in the world heed Dr. King's message and just love each other. The children hold hands, sing "We Shall Overcome" and then they leave, forgetting much of what was said.

Or maybe that was just my school. The point is that our knowledge of many other individuals, events, and sadly ourselves, is limited to what others have taught us. Each January we honor his legacy and the following month, the shortest month of the year, we honor everyone else's.

It's unfortunate that each February we make a feeble attempt to redeem ourselves for 11 months of self-neglect by cramming centuries worth of history into 28 days. Why have we marginalized ourselves? We're doing ourselves a great injustice by continuing to restrict and disregard our historical contributions to this world.

During Northeastern's Martin Luther King convocation in January, Randall Robinson, author of "The Debt: What America Owes to Blacks," helped students realize the importance of looking deeper into our history - a history that begins long before the enslavement of Africans in the Americas and extends beyond U.S. borders. While Dr. King's image sits prominently on U.S. postal stamps, his name marking dozens of Boulevards, Squares, and Streets across the nation, individuals like Marcus Garvey, Ida B. Wells, Chiekh Anta Diop, Toussaint L'Ouverture, Patrice Lumumba, Kwame Nkrumah, Nzinga and many others remain faceless and absent in our memories.

Robinson says ignorance is a damnable condition. If that is the case then no people are more damned than we.

Knowledge of oneself begins with knowledge of one's history.

Ibiere Seck
Editor-in-Chief



February 2003, we're switching up the format right quick, giving one of our NU/ONYX family members, and opportunity to shine at the beginning. Eric "POPS" Esteves gives us his version of the MADD500

Volume 31, Issue 1

"You ever wonder..."

How a white supremacist can say Somali immigrants are invading Lewiston, Maine, but it feels like I'm the one about to get arrested every time I'm around NUPD and they catch a glance of the black fist on my neck?

Why some jails are nicer than West Village?

How my home state (SC) JUST issued its first formal public apology for its eugenics program, even though the program was discontinued 17 years ago?

How some public housing projects are worse than Smith Hall (yikes)?

How Congress can be so quick to rebut Charles Rangel's call for a draft even though there are already too many Blacks and Latinos in the military (many of which should be in college)?

Why the rider ship demographics drastically changes when the south-east section of the Red Line divides at JFK/UMass,?

Why only a few of us seem to know about the 25 cent

wings at AfterHours on Monday nights?

Why Drumline was a fly movie, except for that house party/step show/kissing scene?

How the same people that have been working at the MarinoCenter the last five years still don't recognize your face when you forget your NU ID?

How much better/funnier that Bud Light commercial would be if one of the women were a sister...oops I mean sis-tah?

How George Foreman is able to write a book entitled, "George Foreman's Big Book of Grilling, Barbecue and Rotisserie?"

How al of NU can be closed on a holiday, including the computer lab, knowing DAM WELL I have work that I specifically put off to do that Monday night?

Why there are more of us in the penal system than in college, and Dubyah (Bush) is STILL fronting like he don't know what's up?

Wake up my people.... read....build your communities....do what's in your heart. Peace.

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Music as a first love: Professor Dr. Emmet G. Price III Professor of Music and African American History

Words: Adrienne Thomas

"Thank God for John Birks 'Dizzy' Gillespie" reads the caption under the black and white photo of the late trumpeter. This poster, along with concert announcements and photographs of John Coltrane and Herbie Hancock surround Professor Emmett Price, while he sits typing away on his keyboard.

Ivory keys tinkle in harmony. The deep voice of the bass and tuba roar, along with the occasional blare of a trumpet: these sounds dance down the hall. Inside his third floor office of Ryder Hall, Emmett occasionally looks out onto centennial common, while taking a break from his computer screen.

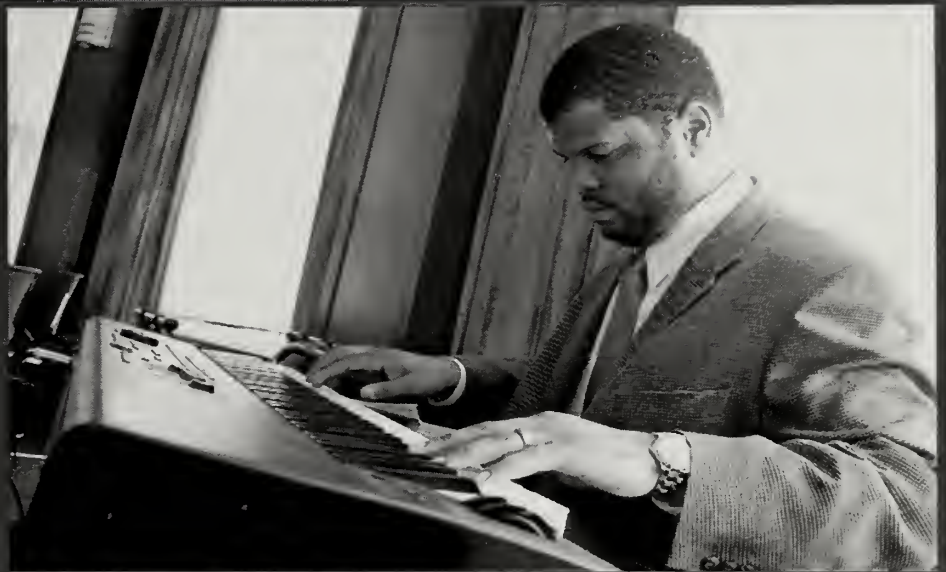
There is a bookcase overflowing with volumes of musical and African American literature. Next to the door rests a long black keyboard on a dark wooden table. Professor Price surrounds himself with music because "Music has the power to make things happen...to invoke feelings, create moods, cause movements...to initiate communication, inspire thought. Within one bar of music, social commentary, and political economic analysis may all reside..." says Price.

As a child growing up in the Leimert Park section of Los Angeles California, Emmett's father helped with the development of his love in music.

"My father would sit me on his lap while he played the piano." I started taking [piano] lessons at four."

Leimert Park, like many urban neighborhoods had its share of violence and crime. Although faced with many opportunities to get into mischief, Emmett's attention was more focused on other things.

"I reached a point in my life as an undergrad that I wanted to surround myself with music," Emmett says. "As a



"Music has the power to make things happen...to invoke feelings, create moods, cause movements..."

performer, as an avid music collector and as an educator." And an avid collector he is.

Within his repertoire of music, one might find an abundance of "Jazz, Gospel and R&B". You may catch Professor Price bobbing his head and singing along to the Jackson Five, Tupac, Herbie Hancock, Donnie McClurkin or Joe Staple. These, he

eled abroad, playing a variety of music from Gospel to Reggae. He's also tried his hand at theatre, involving himself in such productions as "The Darker Face of the Earth," "Keepers of the Dream," "I Am A Black Woman," "Tambourines in Glory" and "Auditions".

"I love working with other people" Emmett says. "The essence of music is communication, so the ability to get into a musical dialogue is exciting. It's like having a conversation with some one you're interested in and who's also intrigued by you. The conversation is good and you don't want it to end".

As a journalist, Professor Price is working with vocal ensemble, dance troupe and jazz quartet on a composition titled "scenes from Calvary". The composition will be a musical depiction of the death of Jesus Christ at Mt. Calvary.

As a journalist, Professor Price

says, with a laugh "are my favorites this week."

Being a veteran at his craft, Professor Price has directed choir, performed as a freelance musician, worked with the Dr. James Alston Quartet, Lance Ellis, Michael Taylor and Clark Terry amongst many others, and trav-

- Professor Price

CONT. ON PG. 18

PE TAKES A BACK SEAT IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

WORDS BY: DELALI GOKA



As a 13-year-old, you and your peers probably jumped out your seats to get to the gymnasium for gym class. The eagerly anticipated class offered an hour or two of kickball and a break from finding 'the common denominator' for those not so favorite fraction problems during math class.

Unfortunately, these days the average grade schooler barely receives physical education. It is simply not a priority. As school administrators become increasingly burdened by state required test and faced with the challenge and responsibility to obtain high-test scores, physical education becomes the last thing on their minds.

Diminishing public school funding and overcrowded classrooms across the country certainly do not help this situation. School gymnasiums are being used as classrooms and school systems do not have the means to employ certified physical education instructors. In turn, the two-hour gym period twice a week has turned into a single hour a week, with the science teacher if the gym space is available. At one time, over eighty percent of

At one time, over eighty percent of high school students had physical education in grades 10-12. Today it is less than 25 percent

high school students had physical education in grades 10-12. Today it is less than 25 percent. Health experts say the deterioration is taking a toll. Physical education has been connected

with emotional, social, aesthetic, physical, and motor underdevelopment of children and young adults. Exposure to

Urban youth attend schools in a school district with minimal monetary funding. This effects the quality of all of the educational programs including physical education and sports

routine, quality physical education as a child shows a strong correlation with increased rates of physical activity and positive attitudes towards physical activity as an adult.

Today's grade schoolers are more likely to play video games or watch TV after school than run around in the backyard or playground. Physical education classes are even more important now because of technology. According to a 1999 report from the Kaiser Family



Foundation, children ages 2-18 spend an average of five and a half hours a day watching television or videotapes, playing video games, using the computer, listening to music or using print media.

However, Black and Latino children face another dilemma.

A high percentage of minority kids live in urban city centers and usually do not have the option of back yard tag or mom taking him/her to soccer practice or ballet, making physical activity available only at school.

Urban youth are hit hardest because in general they attend schools in a school district with minimal monetary funding. This effects the quality of all of the educational programs including physical education and sports. At the end of the day, perhaps, the only physical activity a child gets is walking to the bus stop. Children are losing the opportunity to learn organized sports and most importantly becoming physi-

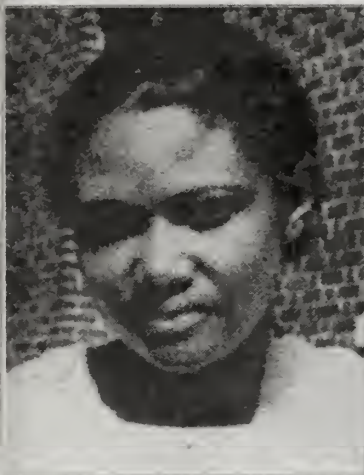
cally fit.

U. S government figures show the percentage of heavy children has drastically increased in the last few decades, becoming one of the most pressing health challenges the U.S faces today. Teens enrolling in the military are increasingly unable to meet basic physical requirements. According to federally funded research being done at clinics across the country, more children are being diagnosed with weight related health diseases like Type 2 diabetes. These findings show that vigorous exercise and health education courses in adolescents can cut blood cholesterol levels and reduce their risk of developing heart disease later in life. Who would have thought not playing kickball or doing jumping jacks at school could amount to the many health problems this nation faces today.



BLACK HISTORICAL EDUCATORS AND INNOVATORS:

A SYNOPSIS ON THE LIVES AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF A FEW SIGNIFICANT PEOPLE IN OUR HISTORY



Roger Arliner Young: 1899-1964

Educator and first Black woman to earn a PhD in Zoology

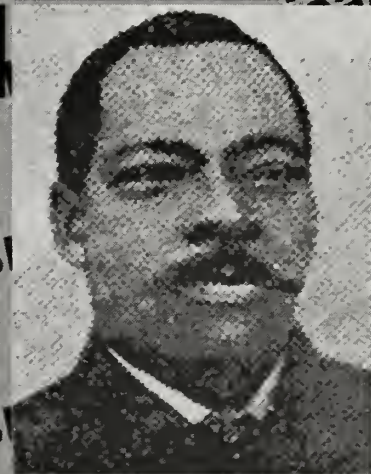
Roger Arliner Young was born in 1899 in Clifton Forge, Virginia. Despite having to face numerous barriers based on her race and gender, Young was able to become the first African-American woman to earn a PhD in zoology. In 1923, she received her Bachelor of Science degree from Howard University, where she taught as professor until 1935, and went on to receive her Master of Science degree in Zoology from University of Chicago. After receiving her PhD degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1940, Young began teaching at the North Carolina College for Negroes and at Shaw University and numerous Black colleges and universities throughout Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

Very few Black women during Young's lifetime had the opportunity to experience the success that she did. However, Young worked hard and should be a role model for all women.

Granville T. Woods: 1856-1910

Engineer and Inventor

Granville T. Woods was born on April 23, 1856 in Columbus, Ohio who, despite his forced to leave school at the tender age of ten, was able to achieve great success as skilled machinist, blacksmith and engineer. Through out his life Woods invented fifteen different appliances for electric railway use and improved the steam boiler. He also patented the Synchronous Multiple Railway Telegraph, making communication between train stations and trains en route possible. In 1888 he was able to develop overhead electric conducting lines for railroads (which helped the development of overhead railroad systems used in many big cities at the time). Large corporations such as American Bell Telephone Company, General Electric and Westinghouse Air Brake Company bought many of Woods' inventions. Woods died on January 30, 1910 in New York City.



Otis Boykin: 1920-1982

Inventor

Otis Boykin was born in Dallas, Texas in 1920 and can be credited for revolutionizing world of medicine and Technology. From 1946-47, Boykin attended Fisk University and Illinois Institute of Technology. A few of his more notable inventions are the burglar-proof cash register and a chemical air filter. Boykin is also credited for having invented the electrical device used in guided missiles and IBM computers. His greatest contribution, however, was the invention of the artificial heart stimulator (pacemaker). In the most ironic of circumstances, Boykin died in Chicago in 1982 due to heart failure.





TRUE HIP HOP CULTURAL CENTER: HIP HOP CREATES A HOME FOR YOUTH

WORDS BY ADRIENNE THOMAS

"It's all about family," Manny says. "Our young people aren't getting the love they need." And when Manny Dambreville and Fred Rice started True Hip Hop Culture Center, they definitely had the young people in mind. With all of its resources, such as a recording studio and computer lab, the Center is a home away from home for kids who often need it.

"'True Hip Hop Culture' is a program for students to do something positive with their time after school," says David Lang, a True Hip Hop Historian and teacher at Paoul A. Dever School.

"Hip Hop kind of acts as a hook," Lang said. "It's something that the kids are listening to in their spare time; it's something that they are interested in. So it's a way to get them to do something constructive."

The idea for such a program as True Hip Hop arose from a need to get young people off the streets and doing something that they would both enjoy and learn from.

"When I first came up with the idea, I really didn't know what direction to take it into," said Fred Rice, True Hip Hop Co-Founder and Boston Police Officer.

"Not too many kids want to hang out with a bunch of cops," says Manny Dambreville, Co-Founder of True Hip Hop Culture Center and also a Boston Police Officer. "But once they

got past the uniform and saw that we are not the uniform, they would open up and that's pretty much why they are here."

Based on the four elements of hip hop; graffiti, break dancing, rhyming, and DeJaying, the youth and



"My concern is helping them to understand dancing together in unison, as well as understanding the basic postures and forms," - Marcus Mays

young adults who come to the center every week, are able to record and produce their own music, as well as engage in other arts, such as theater, dancing, computer training, and graphic design, that will allow them to be creative as well as focus on academic endeavors.

"My concern is helping them to understand dancing together in unison, as well as understanding the basic pos-

tures and forms," says Marcus Mays, a Movement Coordinator for the Center's Friday night dance class

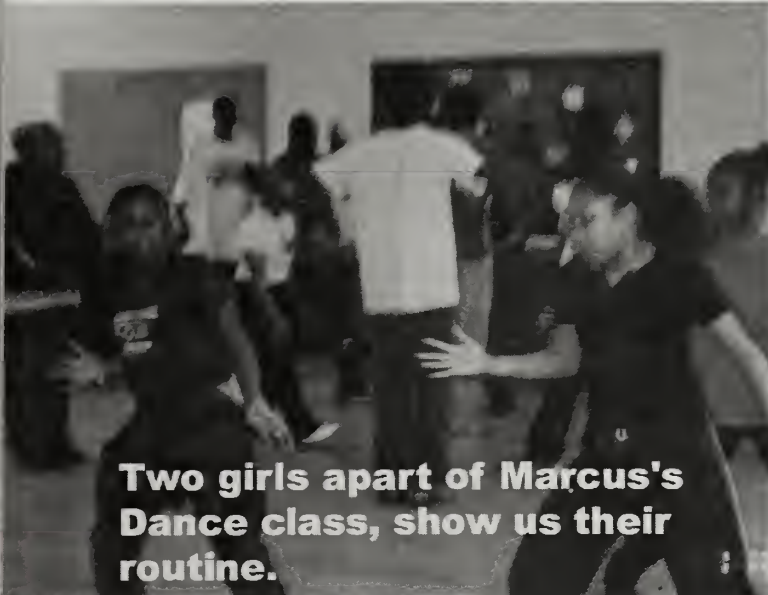
Since a majority of the kids that come to the center sing or rap, strengthening their engineering skills and taking a shot at producing their own material is a plus. Inside the recording studio, youth get the opportunity to express their ideas and imaginations.

"The focus is on their creativity," says Eric Roland, who assists kids with producing, writing, and stage presence. "I have a passion to do music with these kids. Using their creativity, we feed off of each other. They motivate me and I motivate them."

The program shares the building, located at 450 Washington Ave., in Dorchester, with others, yet no

other program is quite as unique as the one designed by Dambreville and Rice. The cost of having such a program however, is more valuable than any dollar amount. When asked what motivates volunteers to come out and support Dambreville and Rice with activities, Jessica Wise, affiliate of WZLX 100.7 FM says "The kids."

"The ambition that they have is phenomenal," she said. "They are here



Two girls apart of Marcus's Dance class, show us their routine.



Officer Fred huddled up, conversing with some of the members of the program.

outside the door, before we even open."

The youth that come every week, sometimes every day, benefit from the program in a variety of ways.

"I learned a lot about how to communicate with other people," says Nina Curry, who works in the Center's Cyber Shop.

Hosea Casanova, 17, of Boston Arts Academy says, "You meet a lot of new faces. You learn a lot about your culture. They teach you the basics. It's a friendly environment and everybody's cool with each other. There is no animosity."

"I heard about the program thought my friend," says Ernest Greer, 16, of Dorchester High School. "Every body is doing the same thing, helping people out. It's a good program; I recommend it to people who are serious."

"The thing I really like about this program is that I can make music and express my thoughts," says Saembu Jalloh, 16 of Madison Park High School.

As active duty police officers, Manny Dambreville and Fred Rice observe the need for more programs that will encourage as well educate and

are not always home. The True Hip Hop Culture Center gives kids that added incentive that there is a place for them and encourages them to reach their goals.

"This program is about empow-

good. That's worth more than anybody can pay me".

"[The young people] know I will go through hell and high water for them," says Rice, "They know I'm going to be there for them."



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Sound Engineer Eric Roland working with one of the gifted pupils of the True Hip Hop Cultural Center

"This program is about empowering young people and helping them to reach their goals, using music as a foundation," Dambreville said "I get a lot out of [the program], it's nothing monetary. When I go home, I feel good. That's worth more than anybody can pay me".

- Manny Damperville

mentor young people daily. A lot of young people they come in contact with don't have many places to go and are often left to manage on their own. Their parents may work full time and

ering young people and helping them to reach their goals, using music as a foundation," Dambreville said "I get a lot out of [the program], it's nothing monetary. When I go home, I feel

Whether or not I can do something or say something to make them feel better. I'm there."

MASS EDUCATION

Massachusetts' New Age of Education

Words: Dana Benton

METCO, which stands for the Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity is the oldest, voluntary desegregation program in the country. The program transports Asian, Hispanic and Black students from Boston and Springfield, Massachusetts to mostly White suburban schools.

According to Jean Mcguier, director of METCO, the program relocates students within thirty- two suburban districts, and "serves roughly 3,000 students...paying \$2,880 per student to each receiving district plus \$1,000 for transportation costs."

METCO has had pleasing effects on many students and families. The popularity of the program is reflected through the 15,000 students that remain on the waiting lists. Parents are encouraged to sign their children up for the program at birth.

Unfortunately, the existence of the METCO program has been financially threatened over the past six months. According to the Boston Herald under a proposed budget in April of 2002 the House Ways and Means Committee recommended that the METCO budget be cut by almost six million dollars. A budget cut this large would ultimately decrease the number of students served by the program. In addition, cuts such as the one proposed will send 1,500 students back into the public school system. A strain that the Boston Public Schools will not be able to handle. Fortunately the recommendation was overturned and the program remains to be financed but it's existence remains in jeopardy.

State Representative Shirley Owens-Hicks, a Mattapan democrat offered a proposed amendment that would increase METCO funding to a \$21 million program. In a Boston Herald interview Owen-Hicks expresses her conviction of the positive nature of the program. "The METCO program is crucial," she said. "The fact that these children get on the bus at 6 in the morning to ride miles to school speaks to the commitment of the participants and the quality of the program."

Many people, however, would disagree.

METCO SCHOOL PROGRAM:

Beneficial or Detrimental Words By: Sade Ruffin

METCO (Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity) is a program in Greater Boston that has been implemented in order to benefit the education of inner-city students. Students travel to public suburban schools from their inner-city homes, all with the goal of having greater educational opportunities than their fellow counterparts. Although METCO has proven to be beneficial, it is not without flaws.

The Majority of the students in the METCO program began in kindergarten. The decision to participate in the program is generally made by their parents. The parents enroll their children, hoping to provide them with a wider range of academic prospects. However, often times the social drawbacks of literally pulling a child from their community to an alien place is not considered.

I transferred from METCO to Boston Public and again back to METCO. I had the privilege of transferring during middle school when I was able to see the difference in both environments and

But unity is not the problem; the problem is forcing unity into a situation. It gets complicated when students have to put on a face while at school and then they are expected to go back to the city where they are around their original culture and settings and have to put on an entirely different mask.

For me, the shifting between these different environments was not that difficult, although it did have some negative effects.

Having to alter oneself in order to assimilate into an environment that has been involuntarily selected leaves a student with either immense animosity towards whites because of the racist attitudes and remarks exposed to. Although the transition can be negative, it also serves as an eye opener for many students.

When it comes to the educational opportunities, as stated previously, the METCO program can be of tremendous help. However, there are obstacles one must face to get hold of the oppor-

tunities.

Suburban schools are equipped with far more resources than any Boston Public School (which is an entirely different issue). In addition, the prestige and influence of



weigh the pros and cons.

As an African-American participant in METCO, you are often times social challenges. A major issue, which is not often addressed, is the tension that comes from not only being an African-American but an African-American female. Although males have it worse (unless they play sports), females of color continue to be the center of attention. We are often scrutinized for what we wear, how we talk, our involvement in school, and most conspicuously, our attitudes. Often times the METCO staff constructs and enforces restrictions on the females because we might "look bad".

For example, females are strongly encouraged not to wear headscarves, and are often forced to mend broken friendships in order to appear unified. The staff is often aware of how conflicts between females of color will be viewed by individuals outside of the program.

many suburban high schools help facilitate the college admissions process for the. METCO prepares students of the inner city for their future, which would be hard for them to receive anywhere else.

METCO, with its challenges, has produced prominent leaders in the communities we live in today. However, it must be understood that along with the benefits of the METCO program come decisions and choices that affect everyone around a student participating in the program.

It is the student's responsibility to take advantage of the opportunities that METCO has placed in front of me, if not, the program would not have failed them, they would have failed the program. Taking advantage of opportunities in the METCO program comes with sacrifices that a student would have to be willing to make for his or her future success.

Aside from violence, poverty and racism, what issue should be of primary concern in the Black and Latino communities? AIDS.

Last November LASO and Legacy 2000 boldly and unapologetically brought the reality of AIDS to the attention of many. Their message for the night was that HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, does kill and Blacks and Latinos are the primary victims.

For LASO President Jorge Sanchez the issue of AIDS is something that has greatly affected him and his family. When Sanchez was fifteen years old his favorite aunt died of the illness.

"I learned about it in the later stages of her illness," Sanchez said. "She really was deteriorating in front of my eyes."

Statistics show Blacks and Latinos account for 16 percent of Massachusetts' population, but make up over 50 percent of HIV or AIDS cases within the state. The question is: how can a group that is considered to be a "minority" make up the majority of people living with such a deadly illness?

The death of his aunt has not only affected Sanchez emotionally, but has also influenced many of the decisions he makes in his life.

"I've made my mistakes but I've learned to really protect myself. You need to know it really only takes one time."

Statistics show Blacks and Latinos account for 16 percent of Massachusetts' population, but make up over 50 percent of HIV or AIDS cases within the state. The question is: how can a group that is considered to be a "minority" make up the majority

belief among many Blacks and Latinos is that AIDS isn't an issue in our communities. The reality is that it is not a "white gay man disease" as once believed. It can penetrate any community.

"The disease is killing us," said Mark Harvey program director of Legacy 2000 Mentoring Program, "It's highly affecting Blacks and Latinos. People of color. That's us. That's you. I felt that it was important to get this message across because this disease is murdering us. AIDS is not gone." It's alive and roaring viciously. I learned something

By being ignorant of the disease and engaging in risky behaviors Blacks and Latinos are allowing AIDS into our communities. We are permitting it to claim

our lives and the lives of our loved ones.

The first step to eradicating this epidemic is understanding that AIDS is a 100 percent preventable illness. Meaning that when having sex with your loved one you should ask yourself how much you value your life and the life of that special person. By being conscience of your decisions you are lowering your chances of contracting the virus. Simply taking the initiative to wear a condom or not to share needles helps us take one step further in the fight against AIDS.

"The disease is killing us. AIDS is a life threatening disease and a major public health issue," Sanchez said. "Its impact on the Black and Latino community is and will continue to be devastating."

"AIDS is a life threatening disease and a major public health issue," Sanchez said. "Its impact on the Black and Latino community is and will continue to be devastating. People are dealing with a virus that has no prejudice.

of people living with such a deadly illness?

The primary reasons for this statistical imbalance are a lack education surrounding the disease and the social stigmas associated with it. AIDS is seen as a social taboo. Once the words HIV or AIDS are uttered people cringe and wish to tiptoe around it thinking that if we don't talk about it the illness won't affect them and will somehow miraculously vanish. The

It affects everyone no matter race, creed, or religion, gay, lesbian, transgender, or heterosexual. This is not a "gay disease" or "drug user's disease". This is a people's disease and if we don't protect ourselves we will allow HIV? AIDS to erase us from this earth. HIV and AIDS are preventable please get tested and protect yourself and others.

Dollar Breakdown: How the Industry's Finest Can Go From Riches to Rags

Words by: Keith Little

Remember back in the days when TLC was the hottest R&B group out there, selling millions of albums, only to later file for bankruptcy? Doesn't seem to make much sense does it? How is it that they complain about their deals when we all know they've got loot? More often than not you hear an artist talking about how they got jerked by a certain company or label. When you see artists on TV or in videos they always seem to be flossin', so you know they are rolling in dough? Not exactly.

Here's the inside scoop on what really goes on in the industry. Hopefully clear up some of the misconceptions about how much money an artist is making.

ARTIST GETS CUT LAST

Everyone hears about advances and thinks you get signed and go get that 7-series Beemer. But most likely by the time it is said and done they will have repossessed it and you will be back on the train. Granted you can do almost whatever you want with the advance, but that money is going back to the label.

When an artist gets signed to a deal they usually get between 8-13 points, which is 8 to 13 percent of the retail price after the label recoups (or when the label gets their cut for that advance they probably gate the artist, promotion and travel costs, money for the video, money for samples, etc.)

Let's assume they get 11 points. The Suggested retail list price (CD's) \$13.00, less 15 percent packaging deduction (usually 20 percent) bringing that \$13 down to \$11.05. The artist gets paid on 85 percent of records sold ("free goods") = \$9.39. "free goods" accounts for free records which are given to distributors (maybe 2 free for every ten bought), artists only receive royalties on records sold.

Eleven percent multiplied by \$9.39 equals \$1.03. Basically, the artist is making about \$1.03 for every record sold. One dollar and three cents multiplied by 1,000,000 records sold (platinum artist) equals \$1,030,000. A million dollars? They're all set right? Not yet. They still haven't paid anyone.

Artist gets paid after label recoups money 1st label, then manager: 20 percent of an entertainer's income, lawyer by the hour or 5 percent of the deal, accountant by the hour or 5 percent of

on the length specified in the recording contract. So the \$70,000 advance is actually subtracted from \$430,000 (the other \$430,000 is in reserves for 2 years). That leaves \$360,000, keeps getting smaller right, but we aren't done yet.

\$360,000
 -\$172,000 (manager's cut, 20 percent of ALL income '\$860,000')
 -\$ 9,400 (lawyer's cut, 5 percent)
 -\$ 9,400 (accountant's cut, 5 percent)
 -\$ 47,376 (taxes at 28 percent)

 \$121,824

121,824 dollars !!! Nice, but it is a far cry from the \$1,000,000 they generated for themselves originally. After two years they may receive the other \$430,000 that was in reserves once it is liquidated, if they have already paid back all of the money. Two years on \$120,000 is \$60,000 a year, which is cool, but you probably know someone who makes that much who isn't involved in music at all. This is also the money generated on one album. If it's a three member group, then that \$60,000 a year split three ways and ends up as \$20,000 a year (that's what most teachers make).

Now remember that this is a fair deal without too many wild expenses. Once you throw in maybe a not so good deal: helping out your family with your advance, new clothes (you can't go on 106 and Park in the same gear you wore on the block, right?) and any other expenses you can think of, it becomes a little clearer how TLC and Hammer were selling millions of records but weren't building up their bank accounts. So remember, getting big money is about longevity, and good business sense. Those thinking they can spend a year in the rap game and drive away in Bentley full of girls sipping champagne will end up right back where they started.



the deal, IRS 28-50 percent depending on tax bracket. Let's do the math.

\$1,030,000
 -\$100,000 recoupable stuff (money for video, money for samples, etc.)

 \$930,000
 -\$ 70,000 advance (recording costs)

 \$860,000

Still sounds good? Wait... Now, half of the \$860,000 stays "in reserve" (accounting for returned items from retail stores) for 2 to 4 years depending

New Artist Emerges in NYC

MANSINGH

New York City's finest came out to Negril Village's cozy and intimate restaurant/bar/lounge to enjoy the sounds of hip-hop's most revered band with one question on their minds: Who is this new artist Mansingh?

Not too long ago BluVibes Entertainment hosted a night of soulful reprieve as MCA recording act, The Roots' latest album, "Phrenology" was previewed and singing sensation Mansingh, took the audience on a melodic journey.

So who is Mansingh? Born of East Indian and African descent, Mansingh is a Trinidadian vocalist whose spirit croons a fusion of soul, rock, funk and jazz and promises to bring the music industry something it's been longing for. His thirst for music led him to vocal training at the acclaimed Youth Pulse Edutainment Academy where

With musical influences ranging from Whitney Houston, Michael Jackson, Daryl Coley and Yolanda Adams, Mansingh has long dreamed of becoming successful musically in the states. Taking a leap of faith, armed with just \$119 and the support of friends and family, he headed to NYC.

Since his arrival, he has sparked the interest of many and even managed to raise a few eye-

brows at various open mics and showcases including that renowned, Black Lily. Through determination and hard work, he has had the opportunity to work with a number of seasoned producers, including Fanatic, who has worked with the likes of Raphael Saadiq and Amel Larrieux. While the music industry is challenging, Mansingh remains undeterred in sharing his musical message with

the world. Emotions, consciousness, and spiritual love fuel his musical mystique. He eats, sleeps,

and breathes music. Pretty soon everyone will hear exactly what this man has to say through his gift of song.

Mansingh is definitely a new voice with an old soul, time traveling through hills, valleys, peaks and his music, will surely take you along for the ride...

HUMAN PHOTOGRAPHY



Sean Paul's Hittin' Hard With "Dutty Rock"

Words by: Maxim R. Olivier

When asked to review the latest album by Sean Paul I gladly accepted the task as an avid listener of the dancehall genre. "Dutty Rock" is an exciting mix of some of the best dancehall riddims and flavorful new sounds to be released in the last few. The fusion of the beats in "Ganja Breed" with that of "Punkie" is musical genius to my ears. The production on this album is some of the best work that I have heard in a long time.

As an artist Sean Paul has hit the mark. He has an uncanny way of knowing what his audience wants to hear and how they want to hear it. This is the most overlooked aspect in the music industry today; it's all about delivery. Sean Paul's lyrical delivery strings together a litany of rhymes and off rhymes coupled with the exotic, yet

"Sean Paul's lyrical delivery...will keep your head bobbin."

smooth sound of his voice that will keep your head bobbing to the beat throughout the record.

While he is known to be a little partial to the females, Sean Paul has not forgotten about the male half of his audience. He applies a certain level of street appeal that toughens up the album in a way that resembles the sounds enjoyed by hip-hop fans the world over.

Overall "Dutty Rock" is a great follow up to the debut album "Stage One". There is no sign of a sophomore slump and I am already looking forward to the next Sean Paul project.

Emotions, consciousness, and spiritual love fuel his musical mystique. He eats, sleeps, and breathes music.

founder and ASCAP award winner, Sterling Gittens, brought his singing abilities to life. Gittens was impressed enough to include him in the launch of Youth Pulse's first album, Heaven is Waiting. He traveled throughout Martinique and St. Lucia delighting local audiences, but he still wanted to take his music to the next level.

TRACK BY TRACK

LEGEND OF THE LIQUID SWORD

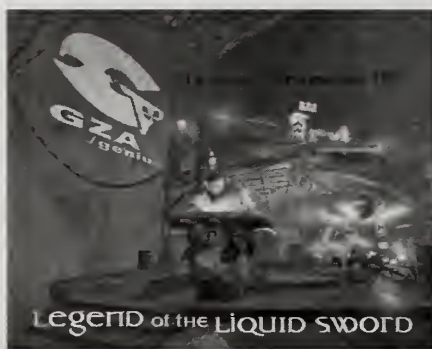
Album Review by Moe Archer

Yooooooooo, Happy New Year (2003) to all my peoples of the African Diaspora, Africans, latino/as, & the otha respected people of color. Real quick, this article is written in Jamaica Queens-slang(a lil' Roxbury, SouthEnd, & the whole NYC, had a little influence). Punk a\$\$ critics can dive off the d****. I know when I need to speak only for white people. So, yeah, yo, the Track by Track is back for the 2G3(don't bite, I said it first). To my Onyx Fam & my little crew here in the Northeast, it's our year!!! A'ight,a'ight,a'ight, shouts go to my thorough '03 headz and my two true ni\$\$as, one in the '05 cycle and the other repin the '04! I got a t-shirt from all of those years in my crib, so I don't give a f**k, but it's definitely time to leave this money vacuum & switch it to reverse on these, republican, colonialist, faggots. One way to do that is to let you know about the New GZA album, "The Legend of the Liquid Sword". As always, Gza keeps it thorough to rep the WU in times of considerable silence. I been promoting a little for him in Queens, handin out copies like I was Santa or some sh**. This piece of literature is dedicated to my uncle, Vernon (Jamaican),who is speakin to God right now trying to get seated for his reservation. You was my pops N I never had 1. you taught me, whatever doesn't kill you, makes you stronger. You always gonna live through me. The track by track is just like tha Meditation Session(Tuesday Nights 10pm-12am), just relax and utilize ya medicine while the GZ tells you about the Labels and Publicity that lead to Fame on this Animal Planet. For this track by track though, afta every song opinion, i'm gonna compare that song to a song on his first album. "Men are mostly right and women are usually left. It's Deep."-moe Think about that a little, before you judge the words->< Moe

Track 1- This intro is just like the Intro to Liquid Swords, in that GZA has his son tell the tale of GZ's MC training and

trials and tribulations coming up in NYC(-ew-ork-ity) from the 1970's decade, through the 80's to the 90's to the 2G2 when the album was released, last December. The ancient asian influence is fluent. GZ is allowing his son to play the role of his father's apprentice to start off the album. That's beautiful to me!

Track 2- The 2nd dose(track) is called Auto Bio and it's pretty self explanatory. GZ is giving a little explanation of



where he came from and what he did to come up; in subtle detail. Just enough to keep you interested, that's the GZA. He speaks a little knowledge over this lack-luster, bass heavy production from some cat named Jay "Waxx" Garfield. The beat ain't that bad, but it ain't that ill(good) either. I'd compare this to "Swordsman" from Liquid Swords. I'sss aaaa'iiight.

Track 3- The sample used for Did You Say That sounds like a few Brooklyn, Jazz, Hip Hop samples I've heard before somewhere. GZ is complaining about record execs and wack producers and MCs. I love how he stays mad at all the bullsh*! out there in hip hop. He reps for the Real MCs. "Producers want 7 points, he didn't play dat." Ha hah ha, that's my ni**a. This track was produced by some cat named BOOLA who, I can say, used that sample the best. I compare this one to "Gold" from Liquid Swords.(a'ight, I'ma call his first joint, L. Sws. from now on, to save space.)

Track 4- A'ight!!! Ghostface starts off the Wu Banga pt.II(for the Ghost supporters) called Silent wit the flare only that ni**a Ghost can bring to the MIC.

Streetlife(the 10th Wu member, to me) kills the 2nd verse and GZ closes it off lovely by "...turnin rap fields into harvested lands." Umm-um-umm, reminiscent of "4th Chamber" & "Shadowboxin'" from L.Sws. The L's are for songs like this produced by Bink(Dog) from previous Lost Boys and other hip hop productions(I just said the LB because I'm from South Jamaica Queens and also, 'cause that's who Bink worked wit the most in his career.)

Track 5- The radio friendly, repetitive beat that sets the tone(like my ni**a from Harlem NYC) for Knock-Knock, didn't excite me too much, although, still a little thought provoking and undergroundly excitable. Some music can't appeal to everybody though. I wouldn't skip it though. Maybe I'd compare this to "Shadowboxin'" for the attempt at more mass appeal, but I see this as, he's on some new, experimentation sh**.

Track 6- Stay in Line isn't one of those live joints. The GZ is just (the GZ is just, I like that) breakin down the science of what will happen to the mistaken cats who step up. This reminds me of the bonus track from L.Sws called "BIBLE (Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth)" by Killah Priest. Arabian "Q-Base" Knight is responsible for the back up music and it's giving me a "Billy Jean(Michael Jackson)" feeling from some string instrument. "BIBLE" was much better.

Track 7- This is definitely my favorite track on the album. The beat is smooth but average, and it sets the tone for the jungle-istic tale of how humans(us) display the behavior and survival techniques of particular animals. GZA titled it Animal Planet and as usual, he gets to the point and shows self-explanatory-ism. Reminiscent of the Labels, Publicity, & Fame(track 10) delivery that he has stayed consistent with since the beginning, he rips sh** once again. It really reminds me of "Cold World", where he rhymes wit Inspectah Deck from the L.Sws. album because he's telling you how wild it is out there in the real world,(which is, as he says, "...like a

jungle sometimes") and giving little hints of how to survive in those struggles being presented. Bitches are mosquitos(there's a difference between a bitch and a Queen and the conscious qats know the difference). Like a chef (Me or Raekwon)would say, "Mmmwwah!!!"

Track 8- An average Wu joint. RZA & Masta Killa join the GZ to make the family track titled Fam (Members Only). I think Masta Killa and Ol' Dirty are related to the GZA and the RZA. Dirty is in jail, Damn! "One nut out the clan, get tha whole click banned from radio..." - GZA,Publicity. Allah Mathematics cooks up the Wu beat and it gives an old Wu school feel but the song also showed me that they need to pass the torches to their younger counterparts that have been training. The track is Asi-Asi for my Latino/a peoples, and it compares best to the Hell's Wind Staff interlude on L.Sws., where RZA is actually talking to his fam using street speech.

Track 9- Awwwhhh sh*T! GZ teams up wit Jaz-O, who used to run wit ex-Nas victim, J-homo, I mean J-hova. Jaz-O laces the sequel to Liquid Swords(the song) called the Legend of the Liquid Sword, wit a beat that totally brings me back to the essence of the original song. Still, a little futurized but, I like hearin' GZ grow. Some cat from Rock-a-fella records, Anthony Allen sings the only corny part of the song, the hook. If he got RZ to do the hook, it would've been much better(Wu wise). GZ rips on this one though!

Track 10- Everybody should know Fame. The third in the Labels, Publicity saga, but more importantly, he ties all the sh** together and still teaches how fame has ruined some peoples lives. Arabian "Q-Base" Knight laced this deep thought, royal flow provoking beats. I feel like the 2003 Egyptian representer. Ancient Egyptian civilization was hip hop happening in a more deserted land, many years ago, on the motherland(for the people of Africa and the African Diaspora). He talks about some real sh** in this song. Like Animal Planet, you should listen to this at least 10 times to get the whole thing, or most of it. One of the most creative joints I heard since Nas' "Rewind" or Ghostface's "The Forest".

Track 11- Highway Robbery is another Arabian Knight creation. One more dose of the mental medicine. "Strictly Hip Hop underground and all ghetto!" says GZA. Some cat named Governor Two's reggae-izes the hook and Arabian Knight took two steps up and 1 across wit this beat(for my chess playin brothas and sistas). I'm likin' this joint as GZ talks about watchin out for industry bullsh**. It's similar(to me) to "I Gotcha Back" from L.Sws. Feel free enough to break

up and roll ya medicine on this page. Hah ahah hah ahahaha

Track 12- Yooo, this is my type of sh*t right here. Luminal (suggests shining) is a little dark, but the beat is deep, and dark is how the streets are now. There's war almost everywhere now and it's been like that since the mid-eighties, when drugs were flooded into the ghettos in every major city. DJ Muggs (from Cypress Hill for the old school headz) was summoned by the GZA to help describe the craziness and violence that happened in the GZA's past. I'd compare this joint to "Killah Hills 10304" from L.Sws. because of the detail of the dreadful ghetto tales presented by the GZ.

Track 13- This track right here, titled Sparring Minds, has Inspectah Deck make his "Duel of the Iron Mic"(from L.Sws.) appearance. I guess he's being



fashionably late or saving the best for last in this mental chess match wit the GZA over a slow, bass drum heavy, instrumental that puts me in the mood for reclinin' and thinkin' about life, and talking/buildin'wit my realeast friends and fam (brothas, and sistas if they mind is right). Another reason that the 2nd half of this album closed the whole LP out very thoroughly and very Wu. Arabian "Q-Base" Knight laced another beat on this one.

Track 14- RZA finally shows his kinetic production energy on this track(the only track he produced) called Rough Cut. Glass breakin' and some crazy sounds that only the RZA and his medicine could come up with, blend wit the drums, creating sound waves for the guests(12 O'cloc, Prodigal Sunn, & Armel) to surf over like the internet or corny white boys wit blond hair and blue eyes(no offense to good people wit those features, if any). I'd compare this to Investigative Reports, except there's no Rae, Ghost, or U-God.

Track 15- GZ creates the beat and hook, which goes "what you know about MCin', yo, I know a lot...", just like a line he used in "Living in the World Today" from L.Sws. Uncut Material utilizes(different word than "uses") some Asian influenced (Wu) sounds and some basic drums to close out the album calmly. I think he's freestylin' on this and that's why it's called uncut; flowing off the top of your head using skills acquired from practice. Some real MC sh*t to end it off correctly. I like that yo!

To back track real quick, the last paragraph of my previous review of the NAS album, "the Lost Tapes" in the November issue of the Onyx was meant to clear up the written opinion change i had about the J-live album "All of the Above" which was featured in the 9/2002 issue of Onyx. Just understand that the last paragraph of that article is me talking about J-Live and one of our editors giving their opinion of Nas' Lost Tapes. Keeping it a little realer. Back to the "Legend of the Liquid Sword" though. Out of the Track by Track \$15.99, highest possible monetary donation(peak payment scale), I would spend \$14.99 to cop this jewel. I think this one is a classic waiting to happen, like Nasir Jones' "God's Son". Nas' recent album release is banging, deep, and heart-flustering and it gets a 14.99 rating because it's very deep and understandable. If you're from the ghetto and you have RIP pieces on your city walls & in your heart from family/friend loses, you'll feel this.

*Before I bounce (as I'm known to do without much warning), The Source has an article called "Rhyme and Reason" that is very similar to this thing I do here. I started in early 98' wit the Track by Track in beantown when I was a freshman. The Source is Boston based (shout to Benzino and his crew who run this city on some low sh**) and the Rhyme and Reason article started up in late 98', and I heard from some trustworthy source that they review college publications to get ideas. I ain't mad though, that's love to me. My idea, in the first hip hop magazine ever created, just tells me that real ni%%as recognize realness. I doubt if it's just a coincidence but who knows. You can do the math. On that note, One L to my Queens Peoples and my JMJ crew (Bx/chester,Prov, RI), and all the attractive (mind, body and soul) black and latinas that have been, and that will be part of my journey. To everybody in the struggle, play your role but don't play around wit it, and be easy.*

One L, Moeq (pronounced "moke", like smoke, but I don't got no S's in my name) out til the next Onyx release

Words By: Octavia Ramsey

Something died. I mean, not bleeding and screaming, weeping and howling, caskets and shovels; just died. I think it was a baby. I think she had eyes that looked like tropical sunrises after a storm, clay red skin, hair like the branches of baobab trees, a tortilla shaped head, and a smile that danced harvest moons on a river.

I think her daddy a soldier. Her mama might be a poet, I ain't too sure about much, but

I always watched them from my window. The mama sang without opening her mouth and I remember seeing her put poetry in the food she cooked. I know she loved the daddy so fierce, it made her weep and yell when he left. And I think the daddy spoke in

her, for when they left. He didn't smile much, except on the inside. She always laughed, an unquiet meditation. And they loved wild and fierce, guarding their baby in their hearts.

One day, they didn't. There were no
more drumbeats, poetry, strength
tucked beneath her bed.
No African Honduras Georgia Mayan
Garifuna fierce wild red yellow orange Black
sounds and shapes coming and going
from the house.

I asked the neighbors, the one's that danced salsa like fire, where the daddy and mama went. They said "Africa" and "Military". I think.

And where they baby go?"

the horizon and ocean to the daddy

They say the daddy held they baby,
precious-like, inside the soul, mind,
heart of his chest all through mudpains,
groans, metal bunks, all the way
through. Say he say he carried they
baby where his strength came from, to
give they baby soul, enough to wander
across the horizon when day cracked.

And when they saw each other again
they say the daddy say he could smell
the tears the mama cried for him in her
dusty locked hair. And they say she say
she could feel the prayers he unearth
for her in the palms of his hands. and
they say she wasn't laughing. And he
wasn't smiling on the inside no more. I
think. And don't nobody know why.

The mama took to yelling: "Listen nigga, listen nigga. I need. You to. please listen. Lover. That's my baby. That's mine. Where we goin? I mean where you goin. Listen nigga. You mine. I mean, that's mine. I mean I'm yours more than mine. I mean, please brotha, listen. Please nigga. I mean Love, I mean brotha. Iiiiiii iiiiii iiiiii iiiiii iiiiii, need us..."

She was so loud she couldn't hear the sirens.

The daddy took to rhyming lies so full
of truth, he couldn't talk sometimes.
The silence, the deepness in him ran so
still. He ran. He ran, they say he ran
before the sirens.

The mama took to laying in bed, real weak like, tattooing her lungs with smoke. They say she convinced herself she was in love with the virgin painted on her wall. They say she made herself trust in someone else's reflection eternal, Rakim, and Mos Def more than the daddy's love. They say they say they say she say she dreamt of sudden days under half-purple mist sunrises that burning water dripped naked on her back and that that was him, loving her. Say she started yelping so loud in her sleep. No one could hear the sirens.

The daddy took to fighting and forgetting. They say it was in his blood, since he was little. Just that when he had her bright lavender breath singing to his eyes and her coconut colored mango tasting legs laced around his, most nights, it made him better. They say he

CONT. ON PG. 16

"There is no agony, like bearing an untold story inside you".

-Zora Neale Hurston

drumbeats and used to tuck strength under the mama bed, for when he would be away. I know, he loved the mama so wild, sometimes he couldn't sleep when she wasn't there.

And they would leave the house. Her, wearing sundresses, even in winter. Her nipples ripe and bursting through. Him, being cool, in a sultry way, smiling at her grownness. Like a morning child, she would always grab his hand. She squeezed it, to press his presence into

They say the mama carried the baby high on her back with all her soul, mind, and heart all through Africa. Say she say she was scared about the journey, but she had to take they baby Love, and herself home to drink the breath of they Ancestors. They say she say she fed they baby pineapples, papaya, oranges, yam, coconut, waakye, kelewele, pepe, fufu...and a whole lifetime of sunlight. Say she say at night she wrapped they baby around her breath and blew against the sunset to send they baby Love energy across

SOUL SPEECH...

A Poem of 49(7-squared)

Words By: Maurice Archer

When I/U observe indirectly
beauty be, somethin to see
Appreciate me
and whoever ya fe/male/fam be
even if she move grime-I-y
me?

Proven to be, really-picky
Experience starts/ends wit "e"
Education is your mental key
Eventually, find my QUE
Tha-otha-two-letters

Put together
Sound like 1ne
E to the N

last lettas of the word Pen
Enter New York where we be repin'

Ending Negligence
eN[in/end] tha bullsh** N[and/in] your fancy pens

I can only mess wit 8-10's

I'll always be your Friend

But if you get
obsessive/excessive actin'

I act like disgusted men
and jet to politic wit Friends
and look the otha way
thinking of anotha way

to keep you, I'ma keep you
much realer than the bitches
no crazy attitude changes

at least less than most women

I know women'll be women

Maybe gifts might be given

If you don't

put me in figurative prison (again)

a good life we could be livin
private sweetness driven

A Queen ca keep me, but

Only when/if she keep it Quiet

Not overprotective like cops

Before a major famous street riot.

Corner/hood stores R landromats

Governin' run dhat

F**kin up education

Everybody

Need to stop the move fakin'

LOCIT UP

Words By: Nema Jackson

I SIT HERE AND CONTEMPLATE, WHY PEOPLE FIND
LOCKING THEIR HAIR SO GREAT?

A FAD FOR SOME

A STYLE FOR OTHERS

AND DEFINENTLY A WAY FOR SOME TO ADD A LITTLE
COLOR

BUT FOR EACH THEIR OWN

REASON TO HAVE LOCKS GROWN

WHEN ACTUALLY THE TRUE REALITY IS THAT MOST
DON'T UNDERSTAND

THE HAIR ON THEIR HEADS STANDS FOR MORE THAN
BEING ABLE TO BE CALLED A KNOTTY DREAD MAN!

IT'S MORE THAN THROWING YOUR HANDS HIGH

AND SCREAMING SALASIE

OR ROCKING HARDLY, WHEN U HEAR THAT BOB MAR-
LEY

OR EVEN KNODDING YOUR HEAD WHEN U SEE ANOTH-
ER DREAD

SEE THE NEXT TIME YOU LOOK IN THE MIRROR OR
RUN YOUR FINGERS THROUGH YOUR TRESSES STOP

AND ASK YOURSELF

WHY DO I WEAR THIS HAIR DRESSING?

THEN YOU'LL BE ABLE TO ANSWER BREADREN, AM I
REALLY A KNOTTY DREAD THEN?

CONT. FROM PG. 15

say he heard the mama tiptoeing
across water, to build a bridge for his
dreams and hers. And he held his
heart, a gun, and squeezed, for her to
come back and they say he say he did-
n't cry just cussed, his mouth, full of
cramped teeth and Spanish tasting
english, when she didn't come back.
And he say he tried to tell her when
too much was more than that.

And he just fought then. But she made
him forget. Then she made him

remember. Then she made him forget.
And why she kept tiptoeing when it was
too much, nobody know?

So many guards, fungus, and marching
made him remember. And he spilled
liquor on his heart to forget again,
everynight. And they say he say he
pushed her out of his space, stopped
tucking strength under her bed for
when he left, and ran before the sirens,
simply because he had to.

I think.

And I know they baby couldn't take
mama laying in bed drowning in misery
and daddy fighting to forget the fight.
Both missing. So they baby went and
begged the clouds to take back life.
I know. I seen it with my own mind.
Baby turned to a raindrop, kissed the
ground, and rose.

I called the sirens; he was running and
she couldn't hear, too late.

DIARY OF AN NU GRAD

Northeastern Graduate, Jeremiah Sheperd Tears of Page Out of His Life And Shares It With Us.

Every college student counts down the days until graduation. Me...I think the countdown begins somewhere between sophomore/middler year. You know, after you lose all your friends from freshman year because you find your soulmate. Or maybe it starts after you meet 3 or 4 other soulmates that you should have lost your freshman friends over but now you're stuck with the one you're with (or at least you think you're stuck). It may start after you got that first C on your transcript and begin to wonder whether this course of study is for you. For me, it started after my introduction to the world of the Bursar. This was the most humiliating experience I ever had at Northeastern.

Picture it. You wake up that brisk September morning ready to begin another exciting but grueling season in academia. You walk up to register and there it is, the gray cloud to a lover's picnic...the heavy rainfall on the window's of a first grader's first field trip...the roommate who won't leave so a couple can, for the first time, have...well you get my point. What am I referring to? I'm talking about that orange card that tells you to go see the bursar. This is not a VIP to some exclusive honors program, but it's become the single reason many people leave Northeastern. I've seen kids with 4.0's withdraw because of it. I've seen cats with three to four jobs trying to pay off what they owe only to fall deeper into debt and leave. I've seen people even ignore what they owe only to be "asked" to leave...

Yeah, As if they had the choice.

But I will say this, strange as it sounds, struggle seems to bind people regardless of color. I say this because I saw people of all nationalities struggling to find ways to stay in school. I saw a lot of these people leave too. I remember their faces, however when they

would find a way to stay in school only to face the same limbo the following season when a new quarter began. It was a look I had for each of the seven years I spent at Northeastern.

I graduated, finally. I walked across that stage and saw my mom smile. I saw a lot of people walk across that stage and although I couldn't identify who in the audience they were with, I knew someone was smiling for them. They too were survivors each with their own battle. I remember people laughing before our ceremonial march...laughing about how they weren't going to have a degree in their folder because they owed the university money.

I wasn't laughing...because it wasn't funny. I was mad...not angry, MAD. My graduation day and this school once again marred a significant moment in my waltz through academia. I would have no degree...I would have a reminder of debt...probably an orange card! I sat there, trying to stay awake through my commencement address, and the time finally came to receive our degrees, which I would not have. Then it happened, one by one, I saw people of all colors, creeds and cultures receiving degree folders that they didn't open. They knew there was nothing in it, yet they all smiled. They smiled because they knew they had completed something deemed impossible...and they didn't need a piece of paper to tell them that. So I beamed when I got my folder...my cheeks still hurt from smiling so much.

Do I miss Northeastern? Sometimes. The rush you get walking from class to class knowing you're part of a bigger something but not knowing what that something is? Yes. I miss that. Do I miss being blocked? No, not at all. But I will end with this. If being blocked has taught me anything, it's that a blockade is hard to get over, but it is not impossible.

NOTE TO OUR READERS***

DIARY OF AN NU GRAD WAS CREATED IN ORDER TO SHARE THE LIVES AND EXPERIENCES OF THOSE WHO HAVE MADE IT THROUGH THEIR YEARS AT NORTHEASTERN, "MADE IT BEING, GRADUATED".

THIS IS A MULTIPURPOSE COLUMN THAT HAS SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE.

FOR SOME, THIS COLUMN WILL RETRIEVE LONG LOST MEMORIES AND HELP YOU TO RELIVE THEM.

FOR OTHERS, IT WILL BE THE COMFORT THAT SAYS YOU ARE NOT ALONE, SOMEONE WENT THROUGH THE TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS YOU ARE GOING THROUGH, AND EVENTUALLY MADE IT.

AND FOR ALL, THIS COLUMN WILL BE AN OPPORTUNITY TO FEEL CONNECTED TO A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE OF REALITY, WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF BEING ABLE TO INCORPORATE IT INTO YOUR OWN.

IF YOU ARE AN NU GRADUATE AND HAVE A "DIARY OF AN NU GRAD SUBMISSION", PLEASE FEEL FREE TO SHARE YOUR LIFE AND EXPERIENCES WITH US ALL.

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For more information contact Daitwan @
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has written articles and reviews such as "John Coltrane, 'A LoveSupreme and God'" and "Talkin' All That Jazz. Where Jazz meets Hip-Hop". These articles along with others are published in his popular column, Jazzology 300, which is published online at AllAboutJazz.com.

As a member of the Society of Musicians (SAM), Center for Black Music Research (CBMR), and Jazz

Journalists Association, Professor Price currently makes his home at Northeastern University as a professor of Music and African American Studies. A true music lover at heart, Professor Price is able to take from music a deep performance and teaching.

"Within music we can find the history of our people. We can find social, economical, and political commentary relative to our time. We can

find a system of how we nurture our young and how we value each other," he says. "We can communicate."



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